THE SINFVLL Mans Search: OR, SEEKING OF GOD.

By Henrie Smith.

LONDON,
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Iob.8.5.6.7.

5 *If thou wilt early ſeeke vnto God, & praie to the Almightie.*

6 *If thou bee pure and vpright: then ſurely hee will awake vnto thee, and make the habitation of thy righteouſnes proſperous.*

7 *And though thy beginning bee but ſmall, yet thy latter end ſhall greatly increaſe.*

IN a ſicke and euill affected bodie, (dearly beloued) we vſuallie ſee preparatiues miniſtred, that the maladies may bee made more fit and pliable to receiue wholſome medicines. The like, yea & greater regard ought we to haue of our ſoules, which being not craſie onely, or lightly affected with ſin,

but sicke euen vnto death, had neede to bee prepared with threates and exhortations, comforts and consolations one waie or other, that they may bee made more fit, not to receiue the preparatiue, but the perfection of happie saluation. And for this cause haue I made choise of this part of scripture, as of a light to shine vnto vs in darknes, a direction to our steps, & a lanterne to our paths, while we wander through the boisterous waues of this wicked world. The text is plaine, and obiect to euery mans capacitie, naturally budding into blossomes. The first containing our duty, which we are to perform towards God. The second, Gods promises if wee performe this dutie.

Our duetie towardes God is implyed in these three conditiõs: first, *If thou wilt early seeke vnto God:* secondly, *If thou wilt praie vnto the Almightie:* thirdly, *If thou be pure and vpright:* so that the whole consisteth on these three pointes. First, what it is that God requireth, namely, a diligent & speedy search, in these wordes: *If thou wilt praie vnto the Almighty.* Thirdly, what effect these thinges ought to worke in vs, a puritie and sinceritie of life, in these words, *If thou be pure and vpright.*

As our duetie towards God consisteth in three pointes: so Gods blessing towardes vs is also three folde aunswerable to the same. First, for seeking hee promiseth, *He will awake vnto thee.* Secondly, for praying vnto him, *Hee will make the habitation of thy righteousnesse prosperous.* Thirdly, for beeing pure and vpright, *Hee will make thy latter end increase*

excee-

exceedingly: yea, though thy beginning bee but small.

Concerning the search

First therefore concerning the Search, it is a worke both in desire and labour to bee ioyned to God. In the Psalme it standeth with the burthen of the song: *They called vpon the Lord in time of their trouble, and he deliuered them.* It is but *Aske & haue, seeke and finde, knocke and it shall bee opened vnto you.* Sauing that heere these wordes are to bee regarded, to wit, how, by whome, and when wee must seeke the Lord. How? First faythfully: for if yee haue but as much as *a graine of mustard seede, and saie vnto this mountaine remoue, it shall remoue, and nothing shall be vnpossible vnto yee.* Then next humbly, for it is the humble petition that pearceth the skies, and that shewed the publicane to departe home to his house more iustified than the boasting phareseie: and they alone that bee humble and meeke finde rest for their soules. And last of all continually, for wee must not faint in well dooing, because the reward is not promised *to him that doth, but to him that continueth to doo.*

Psalme 107.

Matthew 6.

Matthew 17. 2. Eccle. 35

Gallath. 6. 1. Thess. 6.

But wee may long seeke and neuer finde, except wee seeke the Father by his Sonne: *For no man knoweth the Father but the Sonne, and he to whom the Sonne shall disclose him: hee is the waie, the truth and the life, and no man commeth to the Father but by him. There is one God, and one mediatour betwixte God and man, the man Christ Iesus.*

So that if wee doo sinne, wee haue an aduocate, Iesus Christe the iuste, hee is the propitiation

ation for our sinnes, onely let vs seeke the Lorde while he may bee found.

And to this end the word *Seeking* is vsed in this place, that we may learne, that as the heauens and the planets, and the whole frame of nature were ordained to finish their course by motion and operation: so man, as he was ordained to a most blessed and happie end, shoulde attaine therevnto, not by slouth & idlenesse, but by an earnest seeking of the same. The kingdome of heauen is like a treasurie, which cannot be found without seeking & diging. It is lyke the precious pearle, for which the wyse Marchant was content not only to seeke, but to sel all that he had to buy it. God hath placed vs here in this world as husbandmen, to plough vp the fallowes of our heartes, as labourers to worke in his vineyard: as trauellers to seeke a countrie: souldiers to fight the battell of the Lord agaynst the flesh, the world, & the deuill. And for this purpose hath he proposed vnto vs an vntilled land, a vineyard, a triple enemie to fight against; that wee might remember, that we must til the ground, if we wil reape the frnit: that wee must prune the vine, if wee wyll drinke of the grape: that we must fight if we will ouercome. *Hee that tilleth the land* (sayeth the wise man) *shall be satisfied with bread, but he that followeth idlenes shall be filled with powertie.* Idlenes is a moath or canker of the mind, and the fruites thereof are wicked cogitations, euil affections, and worse actions: corrupt trees without fruit, twice dead and plucked vp by the roots, engendering in the mind a loa-

Matth 13, 14

Prouerb. 28

Iude. 12

prouerb. 24

thing

thing of God and godlynes.

Eschue therfore idlenes I beseech ye, and by the want ye find in others learne instructions for your selues. Be not forgetfull how busie your enimie is, if he finde ye idle: first he putteth yee in minde of some vanitie, then offereth opportunitie to practise, then he craueth consent, and if ye graunt him that, he triumpheth by adding practise: he leaueth no meanes vnattempted whereby he may subuert & bring ye to perdition. To one (as to Eua) he promiseth the knowledge of good and euill; another he seduceth with lying speeches, as hee did Pharao the king whom he deceiued by false prophets. To the Iewes he pretended the temple of the Lorde. To the heathen he shewed vniuersalities and antiquities. And to omit particulars, hee leaueth no meane vnattempted, whereby he may intangle the soules of the simple, and wrappe them in snares of death. Fly idlenes therefore, and seeke vertue, and the waie thereof, seeke learning as for a iewel, make diligent search and inquisition after her, seeke early, and secke late. In the morning sowe thy seed, & in the euening let not thy hande rest: seeke him in the daie of trouble, and he will deliuer thee, & thou shalt glorifie him. Seeke him, there is the commandement: he will deliuer thee, there is the promise: and thou shalt glorifie him, there is the condition. To disobey the commandement is rebellion, to distrust the promise is infidelitie, to refuse the condition is vile ingratitude. Wherefore let vs seeke, and and seeke earnestly, with a feruent spirite and hum-

blenes of heart, and let vs perswade our selues that there is no seeking without finding, no opening without knocking.

2 The second circumstance to bee considered in this point, is to whom we must seek for these things Our direction is made to God, *For euerie good and* Iames 1.17 *perfect gifte is from aboue, descending from the father of lights.* And as for many causes we are to seeke vnto God, and to GOD alone, so especiallye for these foure.

First, because we haue nothing of our selues, nor of any other creature, but whatsoeuer we haue we haue it of God. for what hast thou that thou hast not receiued? In him we liue, we moue, and haue our being. Art thou wise in thine owne conceit? O remember that the wisedome of the 1. Cor. 2 world is foolishnes with God! O consider that the Rom. 1 natural man vnderstandeth not the things of God! These things are hid from the wise and prudent, & are reuealed to babes & sucklings. Alas what were man if hee were once lefte to himselfe? a mappe of miserie, and a sinke of calamitie. Alas, how were he able to resist the firie dartes of the aduersarie, who 2. Pet. 5 continually goeth about lyke a roring lyon seeking Reue 2 whom he may deuour? Here ye may note first his mallice, for hee dayly accuseth vs before the chiefe iudge of the Kings bench: when hee cannot preuayle in this court, but seeth his billes of accusation repelled, then he remoueth the matter to the court of our owne consciences, where on the one side he layeth the bookes of the lawe, and statutes made a-

gainst

agaynst sinne: on the other side the bills of accusation brought in agaynst vs out of the bookes of the olde lawe, alleadging these strict places against vs: *The soule that sinneth shall die the death: Cursed is hee that abideth not in euerie point of the lawe.* On the other side hee bringeth in consciences to witnesse agaynst vs, and then inferreth this hard conclusion: *Therefore there is no hope of saluation.*

Then if hee see that wee appeale from iustice to mercie, and saie: At what time so euer a sinner repenteth, the iudge putteth all his wickednesse out of his remembraunce, hee dealeth wyth vs as craftie worldlinges deale in matters of lawe, who when they see theyr matters passe agaynst them in higher courtes, bring downe theyr case into the Countrie, to bee decided by the neighbours: who either for theyr simplicitie cannot, or for their fauour dare not iudge vprightly of the truth of the matter.

So our aduersarie, though God himselfe doo discharge vs, though our conscience doeth testifie our innocencie: yet he accuseth in the third court before men, where hee is bolde to powre out hys whole venome and poyson of his mallice agaynst vs, and to forge what lyes and slaunders, and libels he list, because hee knoweth they shall be receiued as true.

Thus he accused Christ Iesus our blessed Lord and sauiour before Poncius Pilate, and caused diuerse false and vntrue witnesses to come in against him.

2 But if he were malitious onely to wish our destruction, and not mightie to wreake his malice, we should haue little cause to feare: but he is mighty, therefore he is tearmed a lyon, the power of darkenesse, a greate dragon, which drew to the earth a great parte of the starres of heauen: that is, wyth earthly temptations to haue ouerthrowen them which seemed to shine in the Church of God as lampes and starres. O how easie is our ouerthrow, if the Lord dyd not holde vs vp, which shine not as stars in heauen, but creepe lyke wormes on earth.

3 Yet if he were but malitious & mightie, it were better with vs, but he is fierce, and therefore called a roaring lyon, who laying waite for the bloud of the godly, stirreth vp bloud-thirstie persecutors to make themselues dronke with the bloud of Saints: as most grieuously hee dyd from the time of *Iohn Baptist* to the raigne of *Maxentius* the space of two hundred ninetie and foure yeeres, slaying some by the swoord, burning other with fire, hanging some on the gallowes, drowning some in riuers, stabbing some with forks of iron, pressing others vnto death with stones, deuouring many thousands of the tender lambes of Christs flocke.

4 To his mallice, might and rage is added hys subtil pollicy which he vseth in circumuenting the faythfull, he doeth not pitch his tents in anye one place, but walketh about from place to place to spy out his best aduantage, in the night he soweth tares and in the day hee hindereth the growth thereof.

5 He proceedeth after further, and addeth to his

policie

policie industrie, hee considereth the natures and dispositions, and to what sinnes wee doo most incline, and thereunto hee applyeth himselfe, sometimes by flatterie, sometimes by feare, sometimes by feeding our humours hee subtilly entiseth vs, sometimes by violence hee goeth about to inforce vs, sometimes by changing himselfe into an Angell of light, he endeauoureth to betraie our soules into his handes, and in whatsoeuer estate he findeth vs, hee thereby taketh occasion to laye siege to our soules.

Thus ye see noted in a word the force of our aduersary, examine now your selues whether ye haue any thing in your selues, & you shall finde nothing but weakenesse and corruption. It is God that giueth strength to the mighty, wisedome to the prudent, and knowledge to the vnderstanding: he teacheth Dauids hand to fight, and his fingers to battell, he giueth strength to his armes to break a bow, euen a bowe of steele: wherefore let neither the wise man glory in his wisdome, nor the strong man in his strength, but let him that gloryeth glory onely in the Lord. Psalme 144

Secondly, we are to seeke vnto God alone, because none is so present as he for God, because hee is almightie, and with his power filleth both heauen and earth, is present alwayes wyth them that feare him, and readie to succour them in distresse. The Lord is neere to all that cal vpon him in truth, he heareth our gronings and sighes, and knoweth what things are necessarie for vs before we aske.

3 The third reason why we must seeke vnto God is, none is so able to helpe vs as he: but of this I shall haue particular occasion to speake when I come to this pointe, *and pray to the Almightie*.

4 The fourth reason why wee must seeke CHRIST alone, is, because there is none so willing to helpe vs as hee. It is a greate courage to vs to make sute, when wee are perswaded of the willingnesse of him to whom we make sute: and I praie ye, who was euer more carefull for our saluation, and more watchful ouer vs than the Lord? Who euer put his trust in him, & was confounded? In this respect he is called a father, because, as the Father tendreth his Son, so the Lorde doeth all those that put their trust in him. Can there bee anie more willing to helpe vs than Christ? whose whole head was sick, & whose heart was heauie for our sakes? yea in whose body, from the soale of the foot to the crowne of the head, was no thing but wounds and swellings, and sores? but alasse this was nothing to that he suffered for our sakes. He was compassed about with feares and horrors, til his sweat was drops of bloud, and his bones brused in the flesh: he was whipped, and scourged, and chastised with sorrowes, till he cried out in the bitternes of his soule, *O Lord, if it be possible let this cup passe frō me*. The heauie hand of God was so grieuous vpon him, that he brused his very bones, and rent his raines asunder: he could finde no health in his flesh, but was wounded, yea wounded to the death, euē the most bitter death on the crosse: his tender fingers were nailed

to the crosse, his face was wrinkled with weeping and wayiling, his sides imbrued and goared with his owne bloud, spurting and gushing fresh from his ribbes, the shaddowe of death was vppon his eies.'

5 O what griefe coulde bee like to this, or what condemnation coulde bee so heauye, sith there was no wickednesse in his handes, sith hee was the brightnesse of his Fathers glorie, and the Sonne of righteousnesse that shined in the worlde, as to see his daies at an end, to see such throbing sighs and carefull thoughts without cause of his, so deeply ingrauen in the tables of his brest. But was this alone my brethren, sith his excellencie was such aboue all creatures, that the world was not worthy to giue him breath, it was a greater griefe vnto him, to see himselfe made a worme and not a man, a shame of men, & contempt of the people: to see his life shut vp in shame & reproches, how could it but shake his bones out of ioynt, & make his heart melte in middest of his bowels? Who was euer so full of woe, and brought so lowe in the dust of death? Vpon whome did the malice of Sathan euer get so great a conquest? Psalme 14

This though it wer exceeding, yet it was not all, no, it was but a tast of grief in comparison of the rest: behold therfore (if your watrie eies will suffer you to behold) the depth of all miseries yet behind: the sinne that he hated, he must take vpon his own bodie, and beare the wrath of his father poured out against it,

This

This is the fulnesse of pains that compassed him round about, which no tongue is able to vtter, or heart conceiue: the anger of the father burneth in him, euen to the bottome of hell and deepe sinke of confusion, it wrapped him in the paines of eternall death, it crucified him and threw him downe into the bottomlesse pit of calamity, and made his soule by weeping and wayling to melt into these bytter teares trickling from his eies, *O God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?*

O that my head were a well of waters, & a fountaine of teares, that I might weepe day and night at the remembraunce hereof: but least I linger too long about one flower, while I haue many to gather, I wyll conclude this point thus in a word Sith Christ hath suffered these and an infinite number such lyke torments for our sakes, it is blasphemous once to dreame or imagine any to be more willing to helpe vs than he, nay hee is more readie to heare our prayer, than we to offer them vnto him, insomuch as hee complaineth by the prophet Esaie: *I*

Esay. 65 *haue bene found of them which sought me not, al the day long haue I stretched out my hand vnto a rebellious people, whych walked in a waie that was not good, euen after their owne imaginations.* And vnto *Ierusalem* he saith: *O Ie-*

Math. 23 *rusalem how often would I haue gathered thee together, as the henne gathereth her chickens, but you would not.* Wherefore to ende this point: Seek for knowledge, as for a treasure, and for wisdome, as for the wedge of golde of Ophir. No mention shall be made in

Iob 28 comparison of it, of Corall, Gabish, or that precious

eus *Onix*, *For wiſedome is more precious than golde.* Iob 28.
But aboue all things ſeeke it where it may be found and where the place is of vnderſtanding? Surely, man knoweth not the path thereof: the deep ſaith, it is not in me, the ſea ſayth, it is not in me, death & deſtruction ſaie, wee haue hearde the fame thereof with our eares: all creatures ſay it is not in vs: but God vnderſtandeth the way thereof, and vnto man he ſayth: *The feare of the Lord is the beginning of wiſedome, but to depart from euill is vnderſtanding.* Prouerb. 9

The third circumſtance is, when we muſt ſeeke vnto God: and holy Dauid anſwereth, *Early, euen in a time when he may be found.* Pſalme 32. Let vs redeeeme the daie, which wee haue foreſlowed ſo many dayes, wherein we haue ſo long hardned our heartes: let vs take vp this daye and make it the daie of our repentance, let vs make it a day of newnes of lyfe, as it is the firſt daie of the new yeere: let euen this moment be the laſt of a ſinfull lyfe, and the firſt day to godlynes. And as the wiſe man ſayth, *Make no long tarrying to turne vnto the Lord, and put not off from daie to daie, for ſ dainly ſhall the Lordes wrath breake, and in thy ſecuritie thou ſhalt be deſtroyed, and ſhalt periſh in the time of Vengeance.* Eccle. 5

Art thou a Magiſttate placed in high roome & authoritie, and ſeated in the throne of dignitie? then vſe not thy might to wrong and oppreſſiom, grinde not the faces of the poore, ſwell not with pride, deſpiſing his lowe eſtate: *Sell not thy righteouſnes for ſilner, preferring the marchants of Babylon before the citizens of Ieruſalem.* Amos 8

The ſinfull Mans Search.

Art thou a priuate labouring man? *Doe thy duetie truly, bee ſubiect, and liue in dread to dyſpleaſe the good Magiſtrate,* Art thou olde, and haſt conſumed the flower of thy youth in wantonneſſe? breake off thy courſe, and frame thy ſelfe to ſobrietie: giue the water no paſſage, no not a little: for if it haue neuer ſo little iſſue, it will ouerflowe thee: and if thou do ſlacke the raines neuer ſo little, thy ſins will carry thee (like a wild horſe,) thorow brambles & buſhes, and will leaue no ſoundnes in thy fleſh, worke this reformation in thy ſelfe betimes, euen to daie, euen this firſt daie of the new yere: *If ye will heare my voice harden not your harts.*

1. Pet. 8

Art thou young, and doeſt begin to flouriſh like the yong palme tree? O conſider, that the only way to retaine the bloſſomes of thy beautie, and to keepe thy flouer from withering, and thy leafe from fading a waye, is to ſeek early vnto God, and to applie thy minde to vnderſtanding, to preuent the morning watches, and to giue thy bodie to be moiſtned of the morning dew. For beſide the good hours that are well imploied in ſome good ſtudie and holy exerciſe: early riſing bringeth health to thy bodie and increaſeth the number of thy daies.

Seeke therefore, and ſeeke earely, conſecrate your ſelues Nazarites vnto the Lord, touch no vncleane thing, giue no prouocation to the fleſhe, *Striue with the cocke in watchfulneſſe, and riſe with the chirping of the birdes: ſacrifice your bodies a ſweete ſmelling ſacrifice vnto the Lord This ſacrifice is lyke a ſacrifice of fine flower: it is lyke the fat taken from the peace offering:*

Exod. 12.

offering: yea, it is better than anie sacrifice, it is lyke the flower of roses in the spring of the yere, and as the lillies in the springs of waters, and as the branches of Frankensence in the time of Summer: and as a vessel of massie gold beset with rich stones, as a fayre Oliue that is fruitfull, and as the tree that groweth vp to the cloudes. Ecclo. 18

Hauing spoken of the Search, it followeth that I speake of the manner howe it is to bee made. In prayer, by these wordes, *If thou praie vnto the Almightie.*

I haue shewed ye before the force of our aduersarie, receiue nowe a shielde agaynst his force, euen the shield of prayer. He is not to be resisted by ringing an hallowed bell, nor by sprinkling of holy water, nor by the relikes of Saintes, nor by our owne workes and merites, for these are weapons of his owne deuising and making: but by an earnest seeking vnto God: which search and seeking must be made by praier, against which his poisoned venom taketh no effect.

It is his malice that accuseth: praier pleadeth thy case before God, and repelleth all his accusations: for all the prophets do witnesse, that whatsoeuer we aske in praier, if we beleeue we shall receiue it. It is his rage & furie that should terrifie vs, nay, that praier that strengthned *Sampson* to rent a kid, hauing nothing in his hand, shal smite & shut vp the mouth of this lion. As for his pollicie and walking vp and downe, seeking to deuoure vs, it cannot preuayle, *For the praier of the faithfull shall saue them,* and the Lorde shall raise them vp, and if they haue committed Math. 7. Iames 5.

ted ſin it ſhall be forgiuen them, and after this conflict ended, they ſhall triumph for euer with Ieſus Chriſt our ſauiour. But in anie caſe ſee you vnite to your prayer knowledge, that you be not ſeduced to offer your petitions to ſtrange Gods, as ſaints, ſtokes or ſtones. Then conſent that wee aske onely in the name of Chriſt Ieſu, not for any deſert of our own, for whoſoeuer beleeueth in Chriſte ſhall haue remiſſion of ſinnes, he ſhall not periſh but haue lyfe euerlaſting, he ſhall not come into iudgement, but ſhall paſſe from death to lyfe. Laſtly, a confidence, which is a certaine perſwaſion of Gods mercie towards vs: this is that prayer of which the lambe teſtifieth, *That whatſoeuer we aske in praier, it ſhal be giuen vs by God the father.* A thing (derely beloued) ſo precious, that nothing is more accepted in heauen, nothing more gratefull to God: a ſeruice commaunded of God himſelfe, taught by Chriſt our ſauiour, and frequented by the Angelles: a thing of more force with God than anie oration of the eloquent.

Haſt thou not heard how the Sunne ſtood ſtill in the firmament, and was not ſuffered to runne his courſe? Ioſua and Ezechias prayed, and the Sunne ſtoode ſtill. Haſt thou not heard of the ſtopping of the lyons mouthes? Dauid prayed, and his prayer ſtopped the Lyons greedy and deuouring throates. Haſt thou not heard of the diuiding of the red ſea? the Iſraelites prayed, and the waters of Iorden were dryed vp, yea, the Iſraelites prayed, and the waters ſtood about them lyke a wall. Haſt thou not heard how the fierie furnace loſt his heate? the three chil-

children prayed,and the fire loſt his heat. Haſt thou not heard how the heauens were opened and ſhut? Elyas praied, and the heauens were ſhut vp three yeeres,Elyas praied,and the clouds poured downe raine from heauen. 1. King 8

O ſure ſortreſſe,more forcible than anie engine and ſtronger than the gates of hel! and to conclude the ſumme and ſubſtance of all in fewe wordes,the onely thing whereby mortall men haue the clouds and the ſtarres,and the Angels,and all the powers of heauen at commandement.For as Deborah ſung in her ſong: They fought from heauen, euen the ſtarres in theyr courſes fought agaynſt Siſera, for al creatures haue beene ſubiecte to the prayers of the faithfull,to reuenge the Lords quarrell, to help the Lord,to helpe the Lord againſt the mightie. Prayer hath euer beene the cogniſaunce, and the victorie, and the triumph of the faithfull, for as the ſoule giueth lyfe to the bodie, ſo prayer giueth lyfe to the ſoule. Iudes. 11

O that I coulde ingraue the loue of it in your harts as with a Diamond,and ſo inſtill your minds, that my wordes might be prickes vnto your conſciences,and thereby giue yee occaſion to pray often! It is a wonderfull matter to bee able to perſwade men, but if praier bee able to perſwade the liuing God,O how great is the force therof! it goeth thorough the clouds,and ceaſeth not til it come neere, and wyll not depart till the moſt high haue reſpect thereunto. O that you would therfore praie often, and learne of Chriſt,the moſt abſolute patterne of

Luke 6. Luke 5, Luke 6. Iohn 11 Math 26 Iohn 18. Luke 22 Luke 23 Math. 19 our life) to praie continually. He praied in his baptisme, in the wilderneſſe, in preaching, in working of myracles, in his paſſion, on the mount, in the garden, in his laſt ſupper, in commending his ſpirite to God at all times, and in all places, that hee might leaue vnto vs an example of the ſame. It followeth, *And praie to the Almightie.* To thoſe three former reaſons which I brought, why we muſt ſeke & pray to God alone, I added this as a fourth: becauſe there is none ſo able to help vs as the lord: he that truſteth in the Lorde ſhall bee as mount Sion. If God be on our ſide, who can bee againſt vs? It is God that iuſtifieth, who condemneth? The Lorde deſtroyeth the counſayle of the Heathen, he maketh their deuiſes be of no effect. Chriſt is the Angell of greate counſell, wiſedome, and vnderſtanding, and there is no deuiſe agaynſt the Lord. The worlde notwithſtanding is come to that frame, that euery man hath got him a ſtrange kinde of beleefe. Some beleeue not the lawe, but the prophets: ſome be perſwaded in the ſupremacie, but not in the Sacrament: ſome in free wil, but not in merit: ſome in inuocation on Saintes, but not in purgatory: ſome in pilgrimages and pardons, but not in images: ſome lyke the doctrine wel inough, but not the preachers: the moſt beleeue little, yet many beleeue ſomewhat, few beleeue all: therefore to deale plainly, becauſe plaine dealing is beſt, you muſt not beleeue by haltes: I meane, you muſt not repoſe ſome truſt in God, and ſome in Saintes, but all in the Lorde. *The Gods of the*

Pſal 40 Rom 8 2. Tim. 2 Pſam 33 Eſay 9 Prou. 2

Pſal. 105 *Gentiles they haue mouthes and ſpeake not, eyes and ſee not,*

not, eares and heare not. Then what can be looked for at the Lordes handes? But the Lorde is ſtrong and mightie, a mercifull God, and therfore through the Scriptures he is called a rocke, a fortreſſe, a ſtrong tower, a ſhielde, a horne of ſaluation, a refuge, the Lorde of hoſtes, with other ſuche like appellations, that we might be aſſured, that our helpe and deliuerance commeth from the Lord. Pſalme 18

Putteſt thou anie truſt in man, whoſe breath is in his noſtrelles? Curſed is hee thet maketh man his ſtrength, and fleſh his arme. Surely *Pharao* and all princes are a broken ſtaffe, on which if a man leane, it will ſtrike into his hand and pierce it, and lay him groueling in the duſt: *It is better therefore to truſt in the Lord, than to put anie confidence in princes.* Thinkeſt thou that Angels, or ſaints, or images can helpe thee: O fooliſh and impious pietie, to attribute more vnto the Angels that they dare arogate to themſelues. The Angell in the Reuelation forbiddeth Iohn to worſhip him. As for the image, we read that to turn the glorie of the incorruptible God into the ſimilitude of a corruptible creature, is idolatry. Wel may I then affirme with *Moſes, Curſed is the image and the image-maker.* The concluſion therfore of this point is this, that we ſeeke the Lord and his ſtrength euermore, that we praie vnto God in humilitie and ſinceritie, & in full aſſurance of faith continually, who without end is to be ſought, becauſe without ende he is to be beloued. Iere 17 2 King 18 Pſalme 118 Reuel. 19 Rom. 18 Deut. 17

The third thing contained in our duetie is, wh effecte this ſeeking and praying ought to woork

in vs comprehended in these wordes: *If thou be pure and vpright*. If the cloudes bee full they will powre forth raine vpon the earth: and vnpossible it is that a man that seeketh after God and prayeth vnto the Almightie, should not bring foorth the fruites of a godly lyfe, for if the tree bee good, the fruites cannot be bad: and if the head of the water bee pure, it wyll send forth pure water into the cesterns. Wherfore as good motions are stirred vp by prayer, so must they be fostered by practise of life, according to that of the Apostle: *Quench not the spirite, nor grieue the holy one of God, by whom ye are sealed to the day of redemption.* 1. Thes. 5

He quencheth, dearely beloued, in the spirite, which being once lightned with the sparkles of faith and felt Gods motions in his heart, doth neglect to increase the one to a flame, and the other to good workes in this lyfe, but with the dog turneth to hys vomit, and with the sowe that was washed, to her wallowing againe in the mire. Therfore (beloued) loue and seeke the Lord, praie to the Almightie, bee pure and vpright in conuersation, flye from sinne as from a serpent, for if thou come neere it wyll byte thee. The teeth thereof are as the teeth of a lion, to slaie the soules of men, and all iniquitie is as a two edged swoorde, the wound that it giues cannot bee healed. Ephes.

I dare not stand as I would vpon these pointes, fearing tediousnes, wherefore let this suffice for the former generall part, concerning the dutie we owe vnto God.

Psal

Now

Now Gods promises for the performance hereof, yeld vnto vs most plentifull matter of doctrine & consolation. First, of his iustice, that as he will suffer no sin vnpunished, so hee will suffer no worke vnrewarded, but giueth to euery seuerall action his seuerall hire & iust recompence of reward. Shall the houre come, in which all that are in their graues shall heare a voice & come forth: they that haue done well to the resurrection of lyfe, they that haue done euill to the resurrection of condemnation? Shall the Lord search Ierusalem with lanternes? Shall all foule corners be swept, and all pleits and wrinkles be vnfolded? Shall the sea, graue, death and hell giue vp all that is in them? And shall all the dead (both greate and small) stand before God when the bookes are opened? And shall euerie man haue praise of God according vnto his deseruing? Shall we then discerne betweene the vessels of honor and the vessels of wrath, betweene sheepe and goates, the iust and vniust? Finally, shal there be an infallible, generall, and incorrupt iudgement, wherein the booke of all our offences shall be layd wide open? 1. Thes. 5

Now God be merciful vnto vs, be fauourable ô Lord be fauorable. But to proceed, it is thy nature O Lord, to gather vp the wheat and burne the tares, and cutte downe all fruitlesse trees, and cast them into the fire, yea, into a firie furnace that neuer shall be quenched, into an vtter darknesse, where is weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth: then be fauorable ô Lord, be fauorable. Doth not the Lord spare Dauid a king & a prophet for murther? Doth he not spare the Sichemites for adulterie, nor Absolon for treason, nor Saul for tiranny?

rannie? nor Ely for negligence? nor Achab, Ieroboam, nor Iezabel for crueltie? nor Herod, Nabuchadnezzar and Lucifer for pride? nor Pharao for incredulitie: then be fauorable O Lord, bee fauourable to vs, in whom almost euery one of these sinnes do dwel and remaine. Did the Lord for corruption ouerflow the world with water? Did he burne Sodome for her villanie? Did he cast Adam and Eue out of paradise for eating of the forbidden fruit? Did he stone a pore wretch to death for gathering chips on the sabboath daie? then be fauourable O Lord, be fauorable vnto vs. But doth not the Lord spare the cedar tree for his height, nor the oake for his strength, nor the poplar for his smoothnes, nor the laurell for his greennesse? No verily, from the cedar that is in Libanon, euen to the Hysope that groweth out of thy wall, yea euerie one that bringeth not forth good fruits, is hewen down and cast into the fire: it is a righteous thing with God, to render vengeance to those that disobey him, and to destroy such as haue forsaken the law by euerlasting perdition. Beholde, the Lorde shall come in the great and latter day of iudgement, when none shall escape his iudgement seate, with clowdes shall hee come, and euery eye shall see him, euen they which pierced him throw, shall also wayle before him beeing summoned all to appeare moste fearefullye before hys imperiall throne of Maiestie: then be fauorable O Lord, be fauorable. Alas, with what eyes shall wee miserable sinners beho'd him, so gloriously sitting in his ryall kingdome, with all his mighty and holy Angels, and whol number of Saints, sounding with the voice of the archangell, and trumpet of God: causing

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the heauens to paſſe away with a noyſe, and the elements to melt lyke waxe, and the earth to burne with the woorkes thereof? yea, with what eyes ſhall we behold him, when wee ſee the Sunne darkened, the Moone eclipſed, and the ſtarres fall downe from heauen? But alas when he taketh the furbiſhed blade into his hand, when he is readie to throwe the fierie thunderboltes of his wrath, when hee ſummoneth before him, the worme that neuer dieth, the fire that neuer ſhall be quenched, to reuenge vpon the wicked: into what a plight are they then driuen? then leaue they off? be fauorable O Lord, be fauorable, & ſay to the hils, O ye waters come & ouerwhelme vs: wo, wo, wo, how great is this darknes? The godly of the other ſide, are bathed in ſuch ſtreams of bliſſe, and aduanced to ſuch happines as neither tong can vtter, nor heart conceiue. The ſecõd thing we haue to note in his promiſes, is his mercy, which exceedeth all his works. For God, though he haue giuen a curſe of the lawe againſt ſinners, yet ſeing Chriſt for the penitent hath borne the curſe, whereby his iuſtice is not impayred: hee is content to accept our weakenes as our ſtrength, to recompence our imperfection with reward of greateſt perfection, and that which we can performe but in ſmall part, he is content to accept as whole, not for any deſert of ours, but in the ſatisfaction of his Sonne, who paid with the ſeal of his own bloud, the ranſome for our ſins, he hath cancelled the hand writing that was againſt vs. Wherefore we are to pray vnto God, that whenſoeuer our ſins ſhal come in queſtion before him, that he loke vpon Chriſt Ieſus, the true loking glaſſe, in who he ſhal find vs pure & innocent, &

to ſhine moſt cleerely in the righteouſnes which hee hath giuen vs by faith: ſo that wee appeare not in our owne righteouſneſſe, but in the righteouſneſſe of the lambe, who hauing taken awaie the ſins of the world, & hauing made vs as white as ſnow, though we were as red as crimſon, ſaith, he will be mercifull to our iniquities, and remember our ſinnes no more. Of him do all the prophets beare witnes, that through his name all that beleeue ſhall receiue remiſsion of their ſinnes. Again, Drinke ye all of this, for this is my bloud which is ſhed for many for the remiſsion of ſins. Chriſt gaue himſelfe for our ſinnes, that he might deliuer vs from the curſe of the law, euen according to the wil of the father. Chriſt bare our ſinnes in his owne bodie on the tree, that wee beeing deliuered from ſinne, might liue in righteouſues, by whoſe ſtripes wee are healed, for we were as ſheepe going aſtray, but are now returned to the ſhepheard and Biſhop of our ſouls. It is no more but beleeue and be ſaued, beleeue and receiue remiſsion, beleeue, and lay off thine owne righteouſnes, and inueſt thy ſelfe with the righteouſneſſe of the vnſpotted lambe. Dauid was yong, and after was old, yet in all his daies he neuer ſawe the righteous forſaken. Sometimes he ſcourgeth his children, but lyke a louing father he laieth no more vpon them than they are able to beare, for he afflicteth them for his own iuſtice, becauſe they are ſinners: for his wiſdome, to exercise their faith: for his mercie, to cauſe them to repent: but this is the end of all, he helpeth them in their diſtreſſes, he reuengeth himſelfe vpon his enimies, & giueth to his people reſt & quietnes. O that we would

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therefore praiſe the Lord, and forget not all other his ſingular benefits: O that you would confeſſe that his mercie indureth for euer.

The third thing to note in his promiſes, is his bountifull kindneſſe, in requiring ſo ſmall a thing with ſo great ioy & liberall bleſſings: and bindeth himſelf by obligations, as it were, that as ſure as we performe the one, ſo he will not fayle to accompliſh the other.

The fourth, is his patience and long ſuffering, which is not ſlacknes, as ſome men account ſlacknes, but is patience, becauſe willingly he would haue no man to periſh, but gladly would haue all men come to repentance. He is content to ſtay our leaſure till we ſeeke & pray vnto him, and neuer ſmiteth till there be hope of redreſſe. The fift is his loue, in that he is content to ſtir vs vp to holy exerciſes and puritie of life, and to allure vs with faire promiſes of aid, and proſperous increaſe of all his bleſsings in this worlde. The particular examination of theſe bleſsings wold require a larger diſcourſe than (fearing tedioufneſſe) I dare preſume to trouble ye withall: wherefore a word of each, & ſo an end. Touching the firſt, where it is ſaid, *God wil awake vp vnto thee*, it is a greater benefit than the words import: for it ſignifieth, not only that he will heare thee, but that he wil alſo do what thou deſireſt, and ſatiſfie thy requeſt. As long as the ſinner ſleepeth, the Lord is ſayd to be aſleepe: but as ſoone as the ſinner awaketh from ſin, God will ariſe (ſaith Dauid) and his enimies ſhall be ſcattered, and they that hate him ſhall flie before him, as the ſmoke vaniſheth before the wind, and as the waxe melteth before the fire, euen ſo ſhall the wicked

wicked perish at the presence of God. Wherefore as Paul exhorted the Eppesians, so I exhort you, *Awake thou that sleepest, stand vp from the dead, and Christ shall giue thee light*: awake vnto God and God will awake vnto thee, and Christ euen the sonne of God, the bright morning star, shall giue thee the light of lyfe. *In the* second, he promiseth abundance of prayer, fot it is sayd, *He will make the habitations of thy righteousnesse pro-* *perous*: that is, the Lorde will make peace within thy wals, and prosperitie within thy pallaces: he wil command his blessings to be with thee in thy store-house, and in all thou settest thy hand vnto: he will open vnto thee his good treasures, euen the heauens to giue rain on thy land in due season. Thou shalt lay vp gold, as the dust, and the golde of Ophir, as the flint of the riuer: thou shalt wash thy paths with butter, and thy rockes shall poure out riuers of oyle: thou shalt call saluation the wall, and prayse shall be in thy gates. Lo, thus shall the man be blessed that feareth God.

Eph. 5.
Luc 22.2
Psal 1.1.2
Prou 22
Iob 22
Psal. 128

Lastly, for *beeing pure and vpright*: hee will make thy latter end greatly increase, and that thou maist the lesse mistrust his promise, hee will doo it, though thy beginning be but small.

Here (brethren) ye see what a sea of matter is offred me, wherunto if I would commit my selfe, I might discourse vnto ye what strange euents (by Gods prouidence) haue happened in the worlde, what greate Kings and Potentates haue bene plucked from theyr thrones, and what contemptible persons in the eie of the worlde haue ben aduanced to theyr roomes. Howe Mardocheus a straunger was exalted in to Ha-

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mans place: how Ioseph & Daniel, the one a bond-man in Ægypt, the other a captiue in Babylon, were made Princes in those Kingdomes. But because I will not ouermuch transgresse the bonds of modestie, or hold yee longer than in this place I haue ben accustomed: onely remember what the Prophet sayth, *Hee raiseth the needie out of the dust, & lifteth the poor out of the mire, that he might set him with the Princes, euen with the Princes of the world.* Heb. 1 Gen. 3 Dan. 4

Remember the example of Dauid, whome the Lord chose, and tooke from the Ewes greate with young: that hee might feede his people in Iacob, and his inheritance in Israel. Remember the example of Iob, howe the Lord turned the captiuitie of Iob, as the riuers in the South, how hee blessed the last dayes of Iob more than the first, how he gaue him sheepe, and camells, and oxen, and shee Asses, in more abundaunce than hee had before, howe hee encreased him, wyth sonnes and daughters, euen to the fourth generation, so that hee dyed beeing olde and full of dayes. Remember euen our owne estate, for whome the Lorde hath doone great thinges alreadie: as created vs, and redeemed vs and sanctified vs, and not long since delyuered vs from the gaping iawes of those that sought to sucke our bloud. Vppon some hee hath bestowed humilitie, whereby their minds are adorned with vertue: honour vpon others, whereby their persons are inuested with maiestie: vpon others comelines, wherby the other two are graced: vppon others orchards which they planted not, or at the least, vnto which they gaue no increase: vppon others increase of good and vertuous children, whereby theyr posteritie is preserued: vppon others Psal. 7 Iob. 42 Psal. 112 Psal. 24

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the free passage of his worde, which thing a long time had bin obscured by ignorance, the mother of deuotion, as the shauelings call it, but vnder a stepdame of destruction, as we perceiue it: and though hee bestow but some one or two of his blessings vpō vs, yet how much are we bound for these blessings, to sing praise, and honor, and glorie vnto him that sitteth vpon the throne, & vnto the lambe for euer. But vpon whome he hath bestowed all these blessings, O how strictly by good cause are they bound to magnifie the Lord, and to reioyce in God their sauiour. Examine then your owne consciences I beseech ye, whether God hath bestowed all these blessings vpon you or no, and if hee haue, O what great cause haue ye to come before his face with praise, to sing loud vnto him with Psalmes, to worship & to fal down before him, to giue vnto the Lord the glory of his name to bring an offering of thankes-giuing, and to enter into his courts with praise. And yet who knoweth whether the Lord hath greater blessings for ye in store, ye may be sure he will pull downe the mightie from their seate, & exalt the humble and meeke. Surely the Lord doth vse vertue as a meane to bring vs to honor, and whosoeuer you shal see indued with the vertues of this text, I mean with seeking vnto God, with praier & puritie of life, ye may bee sure there is a blessing reserued for him of the Lord, yea such a blessing, as though his beginning bee but small, yet his latter end shall greatly increase.

God increase the loue of these things in our hearts, & make vs worthie of Christs blessings, which he hath plentifully in store for vs, that after he hath heped temporal blessings vpon vs, he would giue vs the blessing of all blessings, euen the life of the world to come.

FINIS.